



EMBASSY OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
FOREIGN BROADCAST INFORMATION SERVICE
SEOUL BUREAU



MSK-6005
3 March 1986

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director, FBIS

THROUGH : Chief, Operations Group

SUBJECT : Monthly Report - Seoul Bureau - February 1986

I. GENERAL

1. The ROK domestic political situation, which is volatile and confrontational in the best of times, became even more polarized than usual in February, with hardline factions in the ruling and opposition camps resisting any form of accommodation on the issue of succession to President Chon Tu-hwan. The tension had eased somewhat by the end of the month, but most Embassy observers regard the current calm as only a temporary respite before warmer weather and renewed student activism, after a long winter break from classes. The February turbulence began on the 4th, when 3,000 riot police entered the campus of the prestigious Seoul National University and clashed with about 1,000 student protestors. This followed by only a few hours an announcement that police will enter universities in force whenever they choose in order to put down "politically motivated" demonstrations, including a campaign by the opposition NKDP to gather 10 million signatures in an attempt to show widespread support for revision of the current constitution. The government considers the petition campaign illegal, but the NKDP believes the present electoral system must be changed before a presidential election is held because it virtually guarantees that the ruling party candidate will be victorious. The NKDP officially launched the "10-million signature campaign" on the 12th in a well-orchestrated move that initially caught government authorities by surprise. The government responded by placing key opposition politician Kim Tae-chung under house arrest, where he stayed until the 24th. (A Foreign Ministry official, explaining Kim's situation to an Embassy officer, said Kim was not being allowed to leave his home for the time being. Asked if this meant he was under house arrest, the official responded no, it just meant that he couldn't leave his house.) The signature campaign, and a hardball response by the ruling DJP, continued amid much publicity in local media until the 24th, when President Chon moved to defuse the situation for the time being by proposing a possible referendum on amending the constitution in 1989, and a commitment by the DJP candidate in the 1988 elections to consider revising the constitution, also in 1989. Kim Tae-chung was released from house arrest the same day, and the NKDP has toned down its rhetoric somewhat on the succession issue. Neither side is seriously backing down, however, and more confrontations can be expected in the months ahead.

2. Gramm-Rudman budget cuts are beginning to extend into "quality of life" areas affecting large segments of the U.S. mission in Seoul. On 13 February the Department of Defense Dependent Schools (DODDS) announced \$10 million in cuts from the system's Pacific Region budget for the remainder of FY-86. The DODDS system in Seoul provides education from kindergarten through 12th grade, for dependent children of military and Embassy families. Among the most significant cutbacks are a 15-day delay in opening the schools for the 1986-87 school year, and the probability of larger classes due to hiring limitations on teachers in some areas and support personnel such as teacher's aides and clerical personnel. The 13 February announcement also abolished high school sports tournaments, which have become extremely popular in the Pacific for athletes and supporters alike. However, Northwest Orient Airlines stepped into this breach and has agreed to pick up the cost of airfare for participating teams for the remainder of the current school year. DOD has accepted Northwest's offer and most if not all of the tournaments are back on schedule, at least for this year. In addition to school cuts, the Embassy is now grappling with a mandated 50-percent reduction in procurement purchases. This will affect on-going programs for upkeep and replacement of furniture and major appliances in Embassy housing, but the full effects of the cuts in this area probably will not be known for several months.

3. United Airlines, which had been scheduled to begin flights to and from Seoul on 4 March, inaugurated its Seoul connection on 13 February after lengthy negotiations and a last-minute agreement by Korean aviation authorities. United now operates three flights per week between Seoul and Tokyo, but hopes to quickly expand services to include daily flights to Tokyo and nonstop flights between Seoul and a U.S. West Coast city -- probably Seattle or San Francisco. The airline also hopes to begin a nonstop service between Tokyo and Washington, D.C., perhaps as early as this summer. KAL, Korea's national airline, has already begun a campaign emphasizing United's unfair competitive advantage because of its unrivaled network of flights within the United States. The KAL campaign may lead to legal challenges, and could slow United's plans for rapid expansion into the north Pacific market.

II. OPERATIONS

Monitorial/Editorial

1. On 21 February Seoul experienced its first full-scale air raid alert since August 1983. Like the 1983 incident, this alert was triggered by a PRC pilot who was flying to the south to defect. Seoul radio in mid-afternoon abruptly carried an "actual alert warning," stressing that the alert was a "real situation." Air raid sirens sounded throughout the city, prompting a great deal of confusion and uncertainty in the Embassy. The telephone system broke down immediately, as virtually everyone tried at the same time to call someone else to find out what was happening. Marine Security Guards announced over the Embassy public address system that employees could not leave the building and directed that everyone stay away from windows. The alert was canceled after 13 minutes, at which time the defection was announced. This was a distinct improvement over the 1983 incident, during which the city remained in air raid status for over an hour. The Bureau filed FYI's on the alert and its lifting, and a number of follow-up reports on repercussions of the incident. Americans in Seoul, and Koreans citizens as well, tend to become a bit blasé about the possibility of military action on the peninsula. This incident was a

forceful reminder that Seoul is only about 30 miles south of the demilitarized zone which separates hostile and at times unpredictable neighbors. It enabled the Bureau to focus on some of the problems we can expect to face if an air raid alert presages "the real thing," and the editorial/monitorial SOP is being revised accordingly.

2. At AB's request, on the 27th the Bureau began wirefiling daily editorial reports on ROK media treatment of the situation in the Philippines, noting in particular any parallels drawn between the downfall of the Marcos regime and the ROK domestic political situation. ROK media have given heavy coverage to Philippine events, with the independent papers TONG-A ILBO and CHOSUN ILBO devoting special attention to statements by key opposition figures lauding Marcos' departure and Corazon Aquino's assumption of the presidency. Government-controlled and pro-government papers have gone to great lengths trying to demonstrate that the situations in the two countries invite no easy comparisons. Despite the denials in the press, the ROK Government has evinced some concern in this area, and Embassy officers in Seoul have passed a wealth of FBIS material on the Philippines to contacts in the government. Twice during February they asked that the Bureau begin receiving Philippine material from Hong Kong Bureau, so they could have current, firsthand material to pass on. The Bureau complied, and the inundation that followed provided some indication of the immense workload that Hong Kong has faced in dealing with Philippines coverage.

III. ADMINISTRATION

Personnel

Korean monitor trainee [] completed his first three months of training early in February. He is progressing slowly but steadily, and has been given specific goals which we expect he can achieve during the next three months. We will have a better idea of his potential at that time.

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Chief, Seoul Bureau

Attachment

Monthly Production Report

cc: Chief, Okinawa Bureau
Chief, Hong Kong Bureau

Seoul Bureau Production Report for February 1986

I. TOTALS FROM ALL SOURCES:

TOTAL PUBLISHABLE WORDAGE FILED DURING MONTH:	557040
TOTAL NON-PUBLISHABLE WORDAGE FILED DURING MONTH:	138490
TOTAL NUMBER OF PUBLISHABLE ITEMS FILED DURING MONTH:	1315

	BROAD- CASTS	PRESS AGENCIES	PUBLI- CATIONS
II. INPUT OF REGULAR COVERAGE: (minutes or issues per week)	13265.00 min.	5510.00 min.	104.46 issues

III. OUTPUT FROM ALL SOURCES:
(publishable words per month)

CHINA

Beijing International service in Korean to Korea	1150	
Beijing City Service in Mandarin	650	
Changchun Jilin Provincial Service in Mandarin	6750	
Harbin Heilongjiang Provincial Service in Mandarin	10870	
Hohhot Nei Monggol Regional Service in Mandarin	5270	
Jinan Shandong Provincial Service in Mandarin	9250	
Shenyang Liaoning Provincial Service in Mandarin	6900	
Shijiazhuang Hebei Provincial Service in Mandarin	1250	
Tianjin City Service in Mandarin	2300	
Beijing BEIJING RIBAO in Chinese		3740
Changchun JILIN RIBAO in Chinese		1950
Harbin HEILONGJIANG RIBAO in Chinese		3070
Hohhot NEIMENGGU RIBAO in Chinese		250
Jinan DAZHONG RIBAO in Chinese		6600
Shenyang LIAONING RIBAO in Chinese		13700
Shijiazhuang HEBEI RIBAO in Chinese		22050

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	BROAD- CASTS	PRESS AGENCIES	PUBLI- CATIONS
Tianjin TIANJIN RIBAO in Chinese			14100
CLANDESTINE (Clandestine) Voice of National Salvation in Korean to South Korea	11800		
KOREA (NORTH) Pyongyang Domestic Service in Korean	198850		
Pyongyang Domestic Television Service in Korean	0		
Pyongyang KCNA in English		107630	
Pyongyang KULLOJA in Korean			0
KOREA (SOUTH) Seoul Domestic Service in Korean	4350		
Seoul YONHAP in English		22760	
Seoul CHOSON ILBO in Korean			1300
Seoul CHUANGANG ILBO in Korean			1550
Seoul Editorial Report on ROK Media Korean			8650
Seoul HANGUK ILBO in Korean			0
Seoul KYONGHYANG SINMUN in Korean			1200
Seoul SEOUL SINMUN in Korean			1350
Seoul SINTONG-A in Korean			0
Seoul THE KOREA HERALD in English			36330
Seoul THE KOREA TIMES in English			39150
Seoul TONG-A ILBO in Korean			9320
UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS Moscow International Service in Korean	2950		